

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Original) An end cap for an intervertebral cage for use in an intervertebral fusion procedure, the end cap comprising:
an annular body having an outermost surface;
a projection extending from an outer side wall of the body; and
a formation adapted to mate with a formation in an end plate, the end plate having a vertebra engaging surface, such that the outermost surface of the body is flush with the vertebra engaging surface of the end plate and wherein, when inserted in an end of the cage in use, the projection engages an edge of the cage in more than one location to limit the travel of the end cap into the cage.
2. (Original) An end cap as claimed in claim 1, wherein the end cap formation is adapted to engage with an under side of the end plate.
3. (Currently amended) An end cap as claimed in claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the end cap formation comprises a flange.
4. (Original) An end cap as claimed in claim 3, wherein the flange extends around the entire periphery of the end cap.
5. (Original) An end cap as claimed in claim 3, wherein the formation includes at least three separate elements disposed around the end cap.
6. (Currently amended) An end cap as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to claim~~ claim 5, wherein the formation is provided as a part of the projection.
7. (Original) An end cap as claimed in claim 6, wherein the formation is provided by a shoulder of the projection.
8. (Currently amended) An end cap as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to claim~~ claim 7, and further comprising at least a first and a second flexible member extending from an

under side of the body, each flexible member having a grip on an outer facing surface wherein, when inserted in an end of the cage in use, the grips engage an inner surface of the cage to retain the end cap on the end of the cage.

9. (Original) An end cap as claimed in claim 8, wherein the first flexible member and the second flexible member are disposed on substantially opposite sides of the annular body.

10. (Original) An end cap as claimed in claim 8, wherein the end cap includes a third flexible member extending from an under side of the body and having a grip on an outer facing surface.

11. (Currently amended) An end cap as claimed in ~~any of claims~~ claim 8 to 10, wherein each neighboring pair of flexible members is separated by the same angle.

12. (Currently amended) An end cap as claimed in ~~any of claims~~ claim 8 to 11, wherein the grip is provided by at least one barbed formation.

13. (Original) An end cap for an intervertebral cage for use in an intervertebral fusion procedure, the end cap comprising:

an annular body;

a projection extending from an outer side wall of the body; and

at least a first and a second flexible member extending from an under side of the body, each flexible member having a grip on an outer facing surface wherein, when inserted in an end of the cage in use, the projection engages an edge of the cage in more than one location to limit the travel of the end cap into the cage and the grips engage an inner surface of the cage to retain the end cap on the end of the cage.

14. (Original) An end cap as claimed in claim 13, wherein the first flexible member and the second flexible member are disposed on substantially opposite sides of the annular body.

15. (Original) An end cap as claimed in claim 13, wherein the end cap includes a third flexible member extending from an under side of the body and having a grip on an outer facing surface.

16. (Currently amended) An end cap as claimed in ~~any of claims~~ claim 13 to 15, wherein each neighbouring pair of flexible members is separated by the same angle.

17. (Currently amended) An end cap as claimed in ~~any of claims~~ claim 13 to 16, wherein the grip is provided by at least one barbed formation.

18. (Currently amended) An end cap as claimed in ~~any of claims~~ claim 13 to 17, wherein the projection extends around the entire periphery of the annular body.

19. (Currently amended) An end cap as claimed in ~~any of claims~~ claim 13 to 18, wherein the projection extends from at least three separate positions around the periphery of the annular body.

20. (Currently amended) An end cap as claimed in ~~any of claims~~ claim 13 to 19 and including a formation adapted for mating with a formation in an end plate having a vertebra engaging surface presented in use to a vertebral surface, and wherein the end cap has an outermost surface, such that when the end cap formation mates with the end plate formation, the vertebra engaging surface and outermost surface are substantially flush.

21. (Original) An end cap as claimed in claim 20, wherein the end cap formation is adapted to mates with the end plate by presenting the end cap to an under side of the end plate.

22. (Currently amended) A kit of parts for assembling into an intervertebral fusion device assembly, the kit of parts comprising:

an end cap comprising

an annular body,

a projection extending from an outer side wall of the body, and

at least a first and a second flexible member extending from an under side of the body, each flexible member having a grip on an outer facing surface wherein, when inserted in an end of the cage in use, the projection engages an edge of the cage in more than one location to limit the travel of the end cap into the cage and the grips engage an inner surface of the cage to retain the end cap on the end of the cage as claimed in claim 20 or 21; and

an end plate having a vertebra engaging surface presented in use to a vertebral surface and a formation adapted to mate with the formation of the end cap such that when assembled, the vertebra engaging surface of the end plate and the outermost surface of the end cap are substantially flush.

23. (Original) A kit of parts as claimed in claim 22, and further comprising a cage.

24. (Original) A method for use in an intervertebral fusion surgical procedure, comprising:

push fitting a first annular end cap into a first end of a cage by deforming at least two flexible members extending from an under side of the first end cap; and
packing the interior of the cage with a material which enhances bone fusion via an opening of the end cap.

25. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 24, and further comprising:

push fitting a second annular end cap into a second end of a cage by deforming at least two flexible members extending from an under side of the second end cap prior to packing the cage.

26. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 14 ~~or 15~~, further comprising:
mounting an end plate onto a surface of a vertebra in an intervertebral space separately to an end cap; and
subsequently introducing the packed cage into the intervertebral space and engaging the end cap with the end plate.

27. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 26, wherein engaging the end cap with the end plate presents a substantially flush surface to the surface of the vertebra which exposes the material to the surface of the vertebra.

28. (Original) A method for use in an intervertebral fusion surgical procedure, comprising:

mounting an end plate onto a surface of a vertebra in an intervertebral space separately to an end cap, the end plate having a vertebra engaging surface; connecting a first end cap to a first end of a cage, the end cap having an outermost surface and a formation adapted to mate with a formation in the end plate; packing the interior of the cage with a material which enhances bone fusion; and introducing the packed cage into the intervertebral space and engaging the end cap with the end plate such that the outermost most surface of the end cap is flush with the vertebra engaging surface of the end plate to present the material to the vertebral surface.

29. (Original) The method as claimed in claim 28, further comprising:

mounting a further end plate onto a surface of a further vertebra in the intervertebral space separately to any end caps, the end plate having a further vertebra engaging surface; connecting a second end cap to a second end of the cage, the end cap having an outermost surface and a formation adapted to mate with a formation in the further end plate, and wherein introducing the packed cage into the intervertebral space further comprises engaging the second end cap with the further end plate such that the outermost surface of the further end cap is flush with the further vertebra engaging surface of the further end plate to present the material to the surface of the further vertebra.

30. (Currently amended) The method of claim 28 ~~or 29~~, wherein connecting the first and/or second end cap comprises push fitting the or each end cap into an end of a cage by deforming at least two flexible members extending from an under side of the end cap prior to packing the cage.

31. (Original) An intervertebral fusion assembly, comprising:
a cage having a first end and an inner surface;
an annular end cap mounted on the first end of the cage and having an outermost surface and three resilient flexible limbs which grip the inner surface of the cage; and
an end plate having an aperture therein and a surface for engaging a vertebral surface in use wherein the end plate is mounted on the end cap by mating the end cap with the aperture and with the surface for engaging a vertebral surface being flush with the outermost surface of the end cap.